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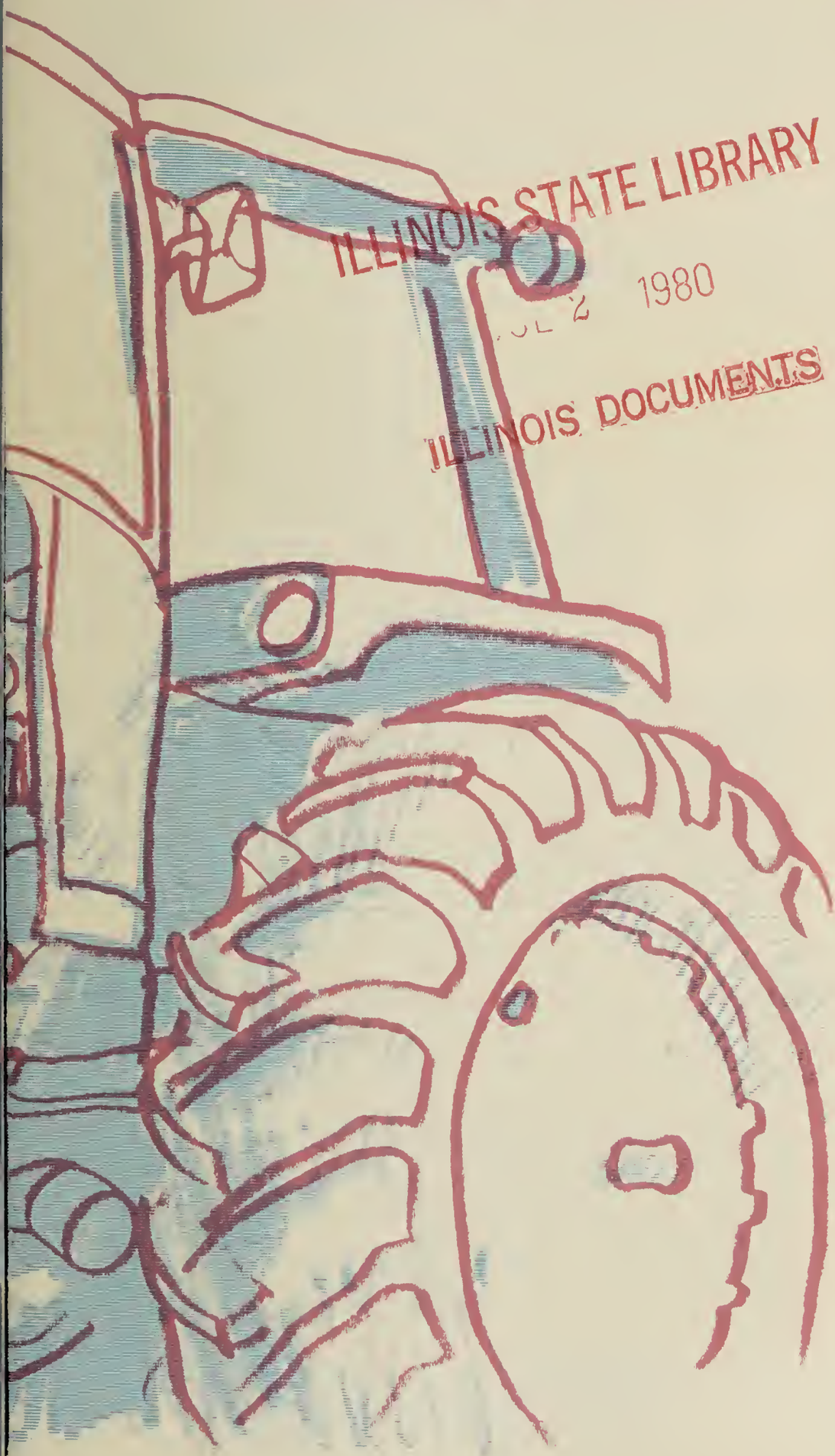
Front-End Loaders...



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Front-End Loaders: A Matter of Gravity

The principle is as simple as a seesaw. If two children, one heavier than the other, sit on opposite ends of a seesaw, its center of gravity changes. The seesaw tilts to the side of the heavier child.

This basic center-of-gravity principle can easily be forgotten during a farm work day, especially when a farmer is using a front-end loader and is in a hurry. By changing the center of gravity of a front-end loader, a tractor operator faces the hazards of a tip-over.

However, by following some basic precautions, this and other front-end loader hazards can be avoided:

- When carrying loads or operating on a hill, keep the bucket low. A bump can easily upset your tractor if the bucket is high. With loaded buckets, drive forward when going uphill and backward downhill.

- Space the tractor wheels as far apart as possible.

- Avoid overloading and be sure to load the bucket evenly. The bucket's capacity is listed in the operator's manual.

- Travel slowly. Be careful when turning while carrying loads, especially loads that may shift or slide.

- Operate hydraulic controls only from the tractor seat, not from beside or behind the tractor.

- Lower the bucket to the ground before leaving the tractor. Otherwise, explorative children may accidently lower it and injure somebody.

- Equip the tractor with a roll-over protection structure and seat belts. These may prove valuable in case of an upset.

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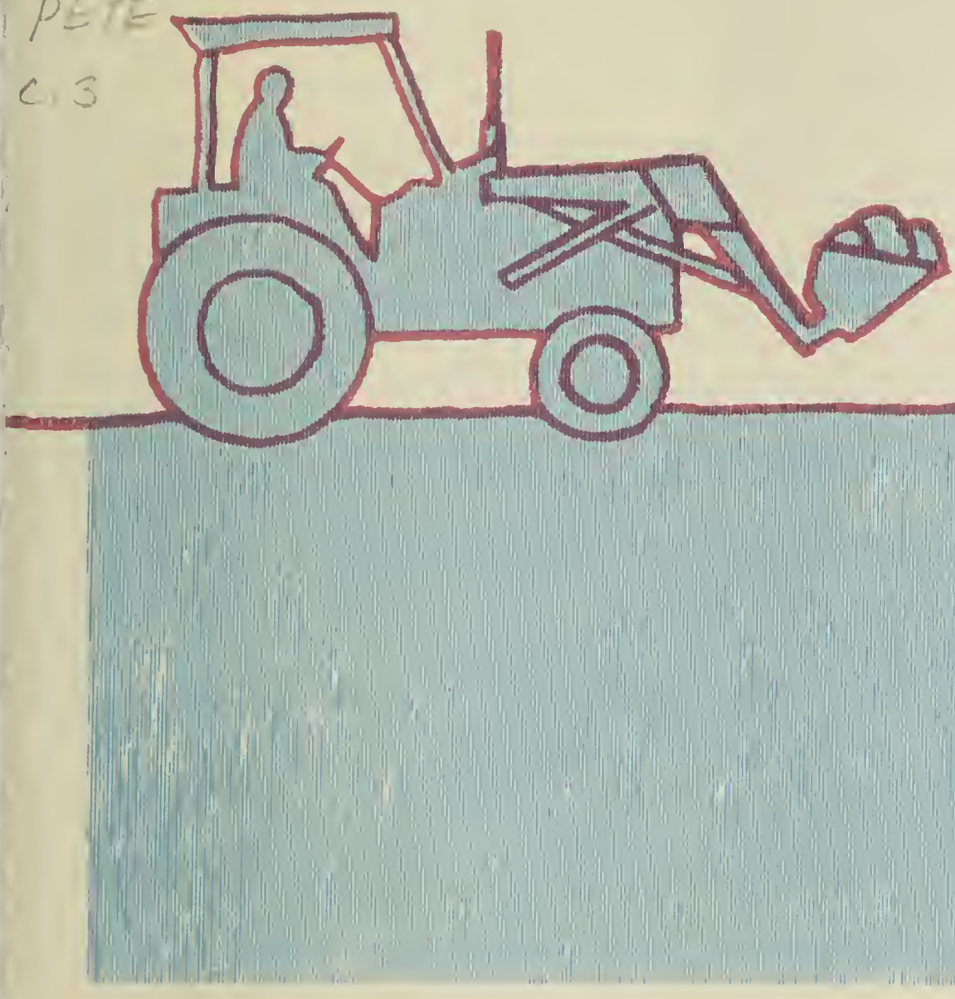

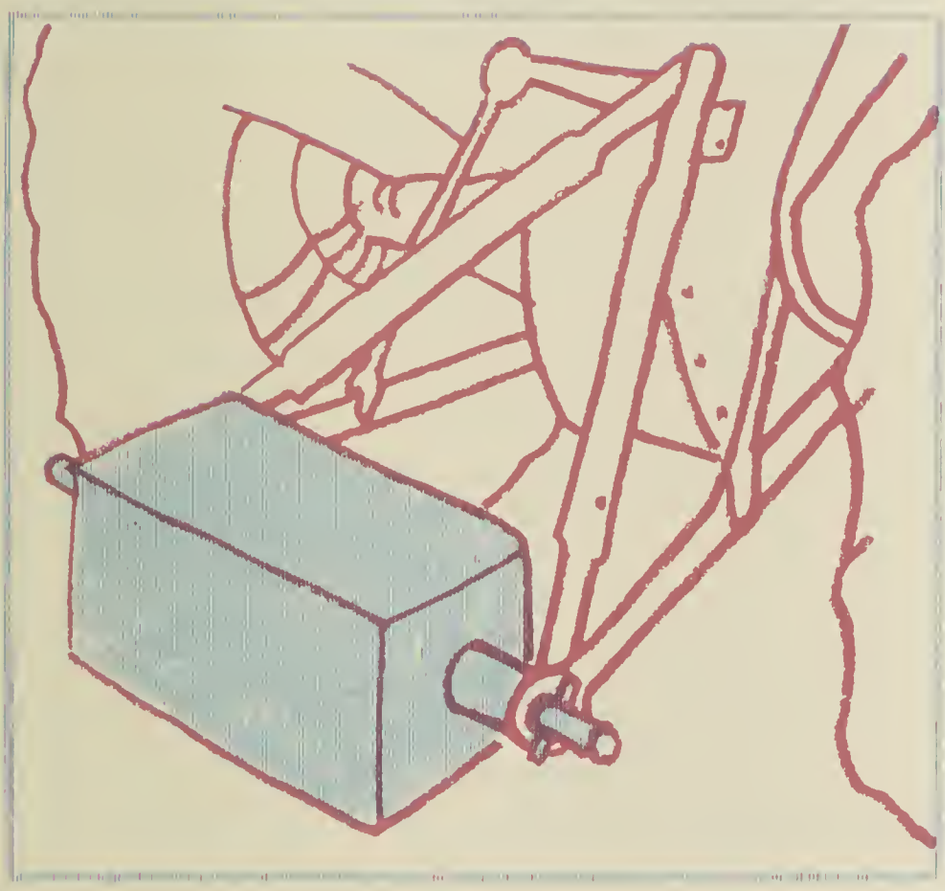

To add weight in the back of the loader, use a concrete block with pipe sticking from each end. Attach the block between the lift arms of the three-point hitch. Drill a hole through the end of each pipe and insert hitch pins to secure the block.

- Use the loader for the proper purposes. Don't use it to remove fence posts, tow or knock something down. If the tractor is to be used in tillage operations, remove the bucket first.

- Don't allow anybody to ride in the bucket.

- Counterbalance the weight of the load in front by adding extra weight to the rear of the tractor.

- Know where you're going and keep an eye out for rocks, holes and other obstacles.

- If you're working inside a building, watch for low ceiling beams and doorways so you don't get pinned between them and the tractor. Also, be sure the building is well ventilated so carbon monoxide doesn't build up.

- Read and follow your operator's manual for both tractor and loader. Make sure the loader is installed properly and doesn't exceed your tractor's handling capacity.

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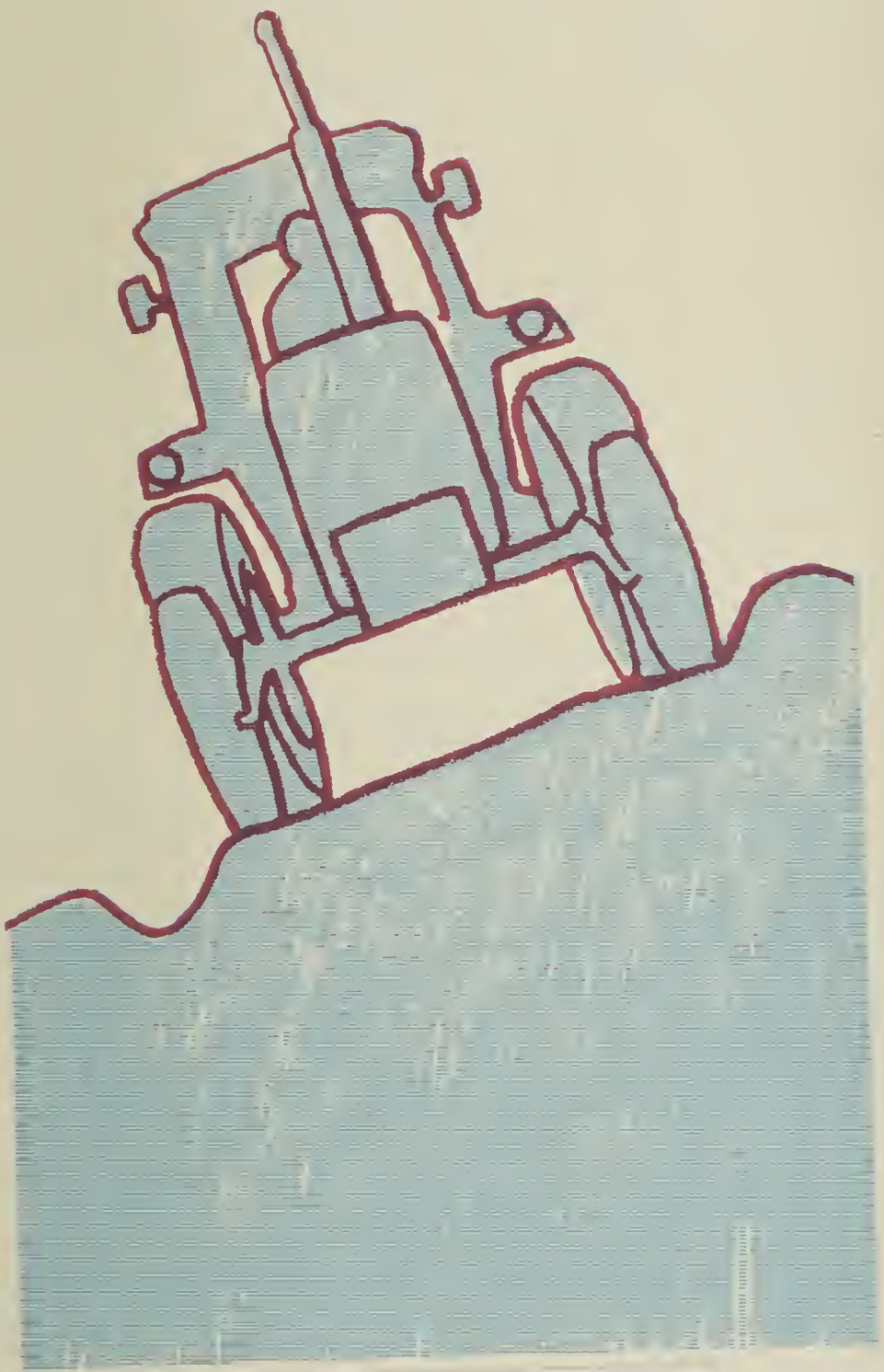
Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. WILLIAM R. OSCHWALD, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

May 1980/10M

...A Matter of Gravity.



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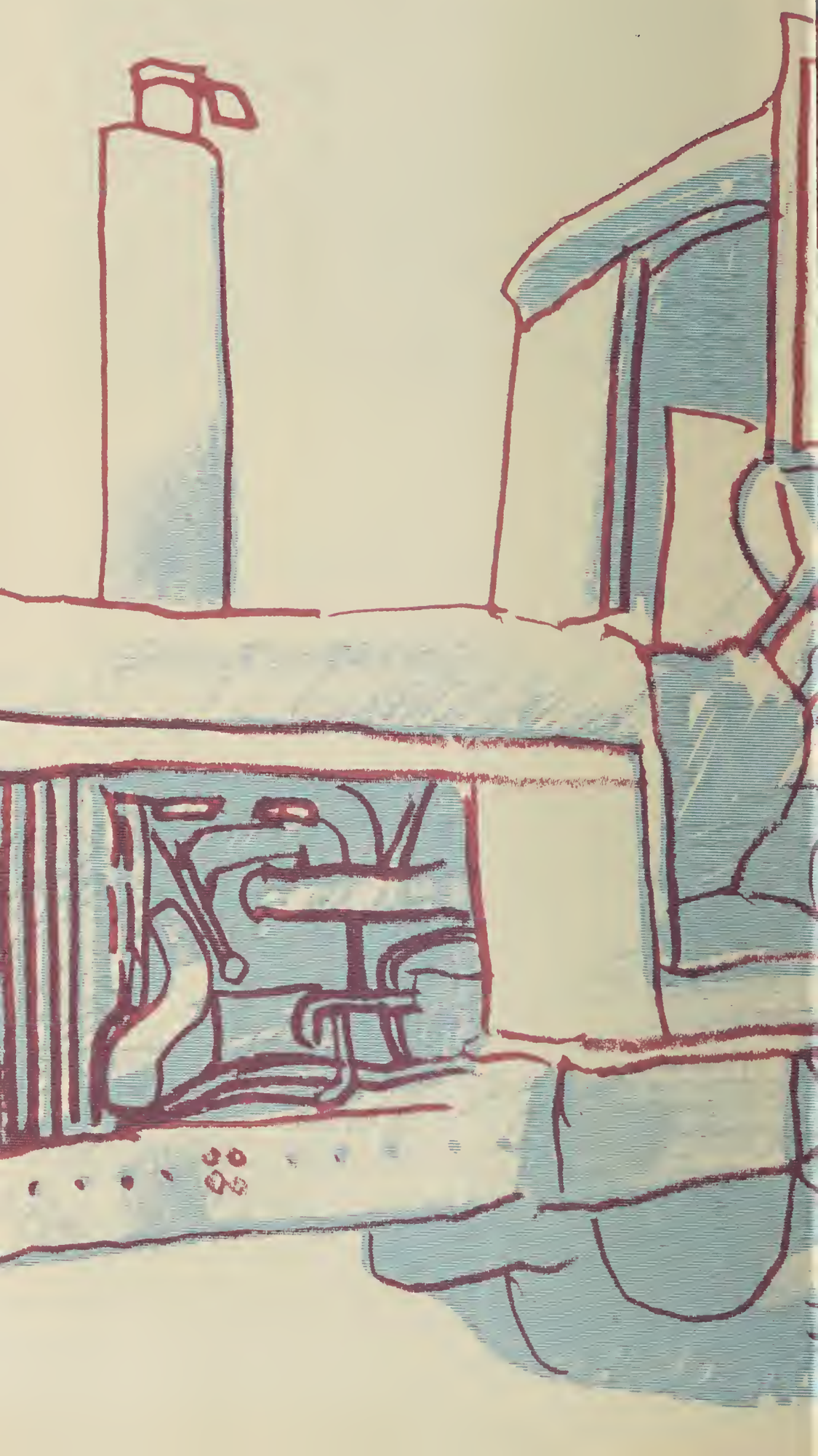
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